Japanese laid-open utility model publication No. 6-58359

Date of publication: August 12, 1994

PURPOSE: Vaporizing carbon or the like which adheres surface of a sensor element so as to prevent deterioration of an oxygen sensor from arising while employing a simple structure.

5

10

20

CONSTITUTION: When an engine stops (S1), certain voltage is added between an inner electrode and an outer electrode order to heat the sensor element surface (S2). in Estimating the temperature of the sensor element based on the inner resistance value R of the sensor element which is calculated based on the added voltage value V and an output electric current I (S3). If the inner resistance value R of the oxygen sensor is equal to or lower than a predetermined value, e.g., 100 Ω , the carbon or the like adhering to the surface of the element is assumed to be vaporized as a result that the temperature of the sensor element exceeds 700 $^{\circ}$ C. In this case, the voltage between the inner electrode and the outer electrode is turned off so as to stop the heating of the sensor element surface (S4).

JPO and NCIPI are not responsible for any damages caused by the use of this translation.

- 1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
- 2.**** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed explanation of a design]

[0001]

[Industrial Application]

This design is related with the equipment which prevents degradation of the oxygen sensor component especially about the oxygen sensor which measures the air-fuel ratio of the gaseous mixture which equips an internal combustion engine's exhaust pipe and is supplied to this engine, and the oxygen density under exhaust air which has a close relation, and is used for offer of the feedback signal in feedback control of air-fuel ratio.

[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art]

An oxygen sensor makes the sensor component which consists of a zirconia etc. face during an engine's exhaust air, takes out the electromotive force generated based on the ratio of the oxygen density in atmospheric air (regularity), and the oxygen density under exhaust air, detects by this the air-fuel ratio of the gaseous mixture inhaled by the engine through the oxygen density under exhaust air, and is used for feedback control of air-fuel ratio (reference, such as JP,63-41761,U). [0003]

Conventionally, as this kind of an oxygen sensor, there is a thing with structure as shown, for example in drawing 4 (reference, such as JP,58-204365,A).

That is, in drawing, after this thing applies a platinum (Pt) paste to the one section each of the internal surface of a ceramic tube 1, and an outside surface which used as the principal component the zirconium dioxide (ZrO2) which blockaded the point, it is calcinating a ceramic tube 1 and has formed the platinum electrodes 2 and 3 for electromotive force ejection. Platinum is vapor-deposited further, a catalyst bed 4 is formed, thermal spraying of the metallic oxides, such as a magnesium spinel, is carried out to the outside surface of a ceramic tube 1 from on the, and the protective layer 5 is formed in it.

[0004]

And while atmospheric air is made to draw inside said ceramic tube 1 as a criteria gas, the oxygen density under exhaust air is detected by generating the electrical potential difference according to a ratio with the oxygen density under exhaust air in contact with the oxygen density and outside surface in the atmospheric air which is made to face the outside of a ceramic tube 1 an engine flueway, is contacted to the exhaust air which is a detected gas, and contacts an internal surface between a platinum electrode 2 and 3.

[0005]

And said platinum catalyst layer 4 is a carbon monoxide CO, Hydrocarbon HC, and oxygen O2. CO+1 / 2 O2 ->CO2, and HC+O2 ->H2+CO2 Oxidation reaction is promoted. Low-concentration O2 which remains into the part when it is made to burn in a rich mixture It is made to react to CO, HC, and fitness, and is O2. Concentration is carried out near the zero and it is O2 of ceramic tube 1 inside and outside. The ratio of concentration is enlarged and big electromotive force is generated. [0006]

O2 of high concentration [under / exhaust air] when it is made to burn in a lean mixture on the other hand Since there are low-concentration CO and HC, it is CO, HC, and O2. Even if it reacts, it is still O2. O2 of not much ceramic tube 1 inside and outside The ratio of concentration is small and an

electrical potential difference is hardly generated.

[0007]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Device]

By the way, in the time of a cold start etc., since the exhaust-gas temperature near the installation location to the exhaust pipe of an oxygen sensor becomes low temperature, as for the time of an engine's low loading, or an engine halt direct rear stirrup, CO and HC under exhaust air deposit [a lifting carbon (C), etc.] a decomposition reaction.

And by adhering to the protective layer 5 of an oxygen sensor component front face, the protective layer 5 started blinding, and by restricting the through put of gas, this depositing carbon etc. had the trouble that a control point Lean-ized and the response delay of control frequency arose, as responsibility got worse and it was shown by the dotted line of <u>drawing 5</u>. [0008]

In addition, product cost becomes high and is not desirable, although there are some which attached the heater separately in order to remove the carbon which deposited on this sensor component front face.

Then, this design is made in view of this conventional trouble, and though it is simple structure, it aims at offering the oxygen sensor degradation arrester of the internal combustion engine which prevented degradation of an oxygen sensor component by making the carbon adhering to a sensor component front face gasify.

[0009]

[Means for Solving the Problem]

One side on the front face of inside and outside in which this design was infixed in an engine's exhaust air system, and each electrode of a sensor component was prepared for this reason, to exhaust air In the internal combustion engine having the oxygen sensor which another side is contacted to atmospheric air, takes out the electromotive force generated in inter-electrode [said] according to the ratio of the oxygen density in atmospheric air, and the oxygen density under exhaust air, and detects the oxygen density under exhaust air While considering as the circuitry which can energize inter-electrode [said], it is constituted including an engine halt detection means to detect an engine's idle state, and an energization heating means to energize the predetermined time aforementioned inter-electrode one and to heat a sensor component front face after an engine halt. [0010]

[Function]

According to this configuration, one side on the front face of inside and outside in which each electrode of a sensor component was prepared during engine operation to exhaust air Although the air-fuel ratio of the gaseous mixture inhaled by the engine through the oxygen density under exhaust air by contacting another side to atmospheric air and taking out the electromotive force generated in inter-electrode [said] according to the ratio of the oxygen density in atmospheric air and the oxygen density under exhaust air is detected and it is used for feedback control of air-fuel ratio If an engine halt detection means detects a halt of engine operation, when an energization heating means energizes the predetermined time aforementioned inter-electrode one, a sensor component front face will be heated.

[0011] Thus, without forming a heater separately, by energizing to this inter-electrode one using the inside-and-outside electrode for electromotive force ejection, deposits, such as carbon which adhered to the sensor component front face with simple structure, are gasified, and it can discharge to the sensor component exterior.

Therefore, it is prevented as much as possible that carbon etc. adheres to the protective layer of an oxygen sensor component front face, and it can prevent that responsibility gets worse by the blinding of the protective layer by adhesion of this carbon etc., a control point Lean-izes, and the response delay of control frequency arises.

Moreover, since the engine performance of an oxygen sensor is securable also at the time of the low temperature of an exhaust-gas temperature, good control precision is acquired from the time of initiation in the air-fuel ratio feedback after low-temperature starting. As a result, the initiation stage of air-fuel ratio feedback can also be brought forward, and exhaust air emission can be improved by this.

[0012]

[Example]

Below, the example of this design is explained based on a drawing.

<u>Drawing 1</u> and <u>drawing 2</u> are ZrO2. It is drawing showing the structure of the oxygen sensor 10 of a tube mold, and the ceramic tube 12 (henceforth a zirconia tube) as a sensor component is made to hold to the point of the holder 11 attached in the engine exhaust pipe wall E, and this is covered by the protector 13 with slit 13a to it.

[0013]

Inside electrode 12a and ground-electrode 12b for electromotive force ejection are formed in the one section each of the internal surface of this zirconia tube 12, and an outside surface, the electromotive force usually generated according to the ratio of the oxygen density in atmospheric air and the oxygen density under exhaust air is taken out from this electrode in it, and the oxygen density under exhaust air is detected in it. In addition, in order to maintain an insulating condition with an electrode holder 11 to ground-electrode 12b of a 12 zirconia tube edge, a zirconium dioxide (ZrO2) is applied from a top, and printing printing is carried out.

[0014]

Moreover, in the opening edge of the zirconia tube 12, the contact plates 14a and 14b divided into two which are a conductor are electrically contacted to inside electrode 12a and ground-electrode 12b, respectively, these contact plates 14a and 14b are pressed by the apical surface of the tubed isolation bush 15, and the isolation bush 15 is fixed to the electrode holder 11 through the pan spring 17 with the covering 16 which carried out fastening immobilization.

And sticking-by-pressure immobilization of the lead wire 19a and 19b is carried out at the contact plates 14a and 14b, and these lead wire 19a and 19b is ****(ed) in the rubber tube 20 by which fastening immobilization is carried out with the covering 16 with which it is equipped in the hole of the end face section of the isolation bush 15, and is drawn outside.

Sensor component 12 front face is heated by impressing an electrical potential difference from a debattery 22 according to the instruction from a control unit 21 between this lead-wire 19a and 19b. [0016]

Moreover, the applied-voltage value V of a between [lead-wire 19a and 19b] and the output current value I calculated as terminal voltage of the resistance gamma for current detection are inputted into a control unit 21, and the internal resistance value R of an oxygen sensor is computed as R=V/I based on this input value.

Next, based on the flow chart of <u>drawing 3</u>, the heater energization routine of the oxygen sensor concerning this design is explained.

[0017]

First, at step 1 (henceforth "S1"), it distinguishes whether the engine was suspended by setting an ignition key switch to OFF. And if it progresses to S2 and an engine is in operational status when it is distinguished that the engine was suspended, it will escape from this routine and will end. In S2, an electrical potential difference is impressed between inside electrode 12a and ground-electrode 12b through lead wire 19a and 19b, and sensor component 12 front face is heated. [0018]

In S3, a sensor chip temperature is presumed based on the oxygen sensor internal resistance value R computed from the applied-voltage value V of a between [lead-wire 19a and 19b], and the output current value I calculated as terminal voltage of the resistance gamma for current detection. Namely, if the oxygen sensor internal resistance value R is a predetermined less than value, for example, 100ohms, since it will be presumed that there is a sensor chip temperature more than 700-degreeC, heating to a sensor component is ended by setting energization of a between [an inside electrode and a ground electrode] to OFF by S4. And if resistance R has not yet reached a predetermined value, the routine from S2 is repeated until it reaches a predetermined value. Thus, although it ends with the configuration which detects the sensor internal resistance R and controls the resistance welding time, then the necessary minimum amount of energization, it is good also as a configuration which carries out fixed time amount energization in simple.

[0019]

In addition, S1 functions as an engine halt detection means, and S2 functions as an energization heating means here.

Thus, though it is simple structure by not forming a heater separately, impressing an electrical potential difference between the inside electrode for electromotive force ejection, and a ground electrode, and heating a sensor component front face, deposits, such as carbon adhering to a sensor component front face, are gasified, and it is discharged in the sensor component exterior. Therefore, when it is prevented as much as possible that carbon etc. adheres to the protective layer of an oxygen sensor, for example, a protective layer starts blinding with carbon etc., it can prevent that responsibility gets worse, a control point Lean-izes, and the response delay of control frequency arises.

[0020]

Moreover, since the engine performance of an oxygen sensor is securable also at the time of the low temperature of an exhaust-gas temperature, good control precision is acquired from the time of initiation in the air-fuel ratio feedback after low-temperature starting. As a result, the initiation stage of air-fuel ratio feedback can also be brought forward, and exhaust air emission can be improved by this.

[0021]

[Effect of the Device]

As explained above, while preparing the inside-and-outside electrode for electromotive force ejection in the one section each of the internal surface of an oxygen sensor component, and an outside surface according to this design Since it constituted so that a sensor component front face might be heated, when an energization heating means energized the predetermined time aforementioned inter-electrode one when the engine halt detection means detected a halt of engine operation It is not necessary to form a heater separately, and though it is simple structure, deposits, such as carbon adhering to a sensor component front face, are gasified. It is discharged in the sensor component exterior, and it is prevented as much as possible that carbon etc. adheres to the protective layer of an oxygen sensor component front face, for example, it can prevent that a protective layer starts blinding, responsibility gets worse, a control point Lean-izes, and the response delay of control frequency arises.

[0022]

Moreover, since the engine performance of an oxygen sensor is securable also at the time of the low temperature of an exhaust-gas temperature, good control precision can be acquired from the time of initiation in the air-fuel ratio feedback after low-temperature starting, as a result the initiation stage of air-fuel ratio feedback can also be brought forward, and exhaust air emission can be improved by this.

JPO and NCIPI are not responsible for any damages caused by the use of this translation.

- 1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
- 2.**** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

CLAIMS

[Utility model registration claim]

[Claim 1] One side on the front face of inside and outside in which it was infixed in an engine's exhaust air system, and each electrode of a sensor component was prepared to exhaust air In the internal combustion engine having the oxygen sensor which another side is contacted to atmospheric air, takes out the electromotive force generated in inter-electrode [said] according to the ratio of the oxygen density in atmospheric air, and the oxygen density under exhaust air, and detects the oxygen density under exhaust air. The oxygen sensor degradation arrester of the internal combustion engine characterized by constituting including an engine halt detection means to detect an engine's idle state, and an energization heating means to energize the predetermined time aforementioned interelectrode one and to heat a sensor component front face after an engine halt while considering as the circuitry which can energize inter-electrode [said].

JPO and NCIPI are not responsible for any damages caused by the use of this translation.

- 1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
- 2.**** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Drawing 1] The sectional view showing the structure of the oxygen sensor concerning this design.

[Drawing 2] For (a), the decomposition perspective view which omitted some oxygen sensors of

drawing 1, and (b) are the bottom view of the zirconia tube shown in (a).

[Drawing 3] The flow chart which shows the energization routine to an oxygen sensor.

[Drawing 4] The sectional view showing the structure of the conventional oxygen sensor.

[Drawing 5] The explanatory view for explaining the fault of the conventional oxygen sensor.

[Description of Notations]

10 Oxygen Sensor

11 Holder

12 Zirconia Tube

12a, an inside electrode

12b Ground electrode

13 Protector

14a, b Contact plate

15 Isolation Bush

16 Covering

17 Pan Spring

19a, b Lead wire

20 Rubber Tube

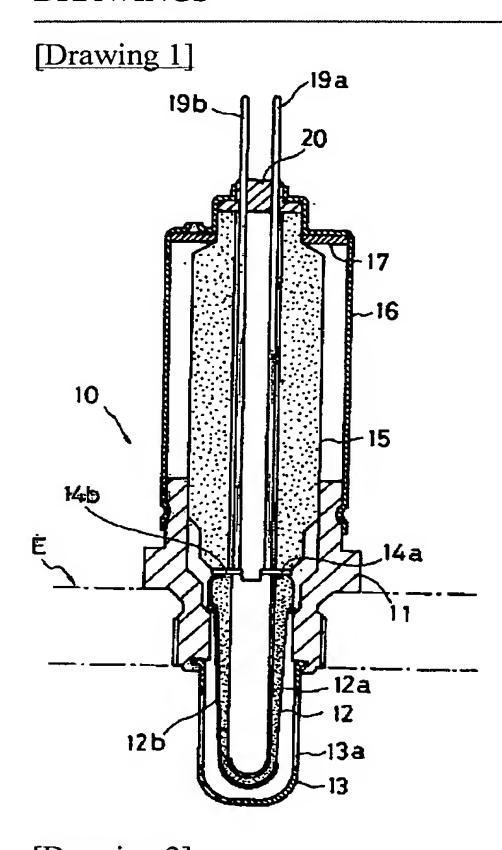
21 Control Unit

22 Dc-battery

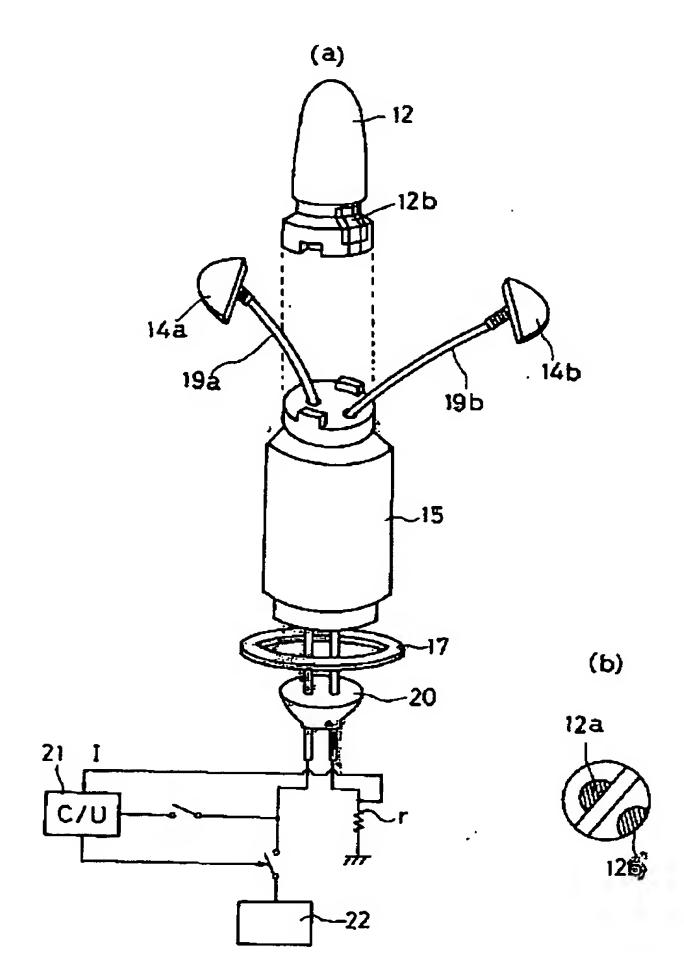
JPO and NCIPI are not responsible for any damages caused by the use of this translation.

- 1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
- 2.**** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

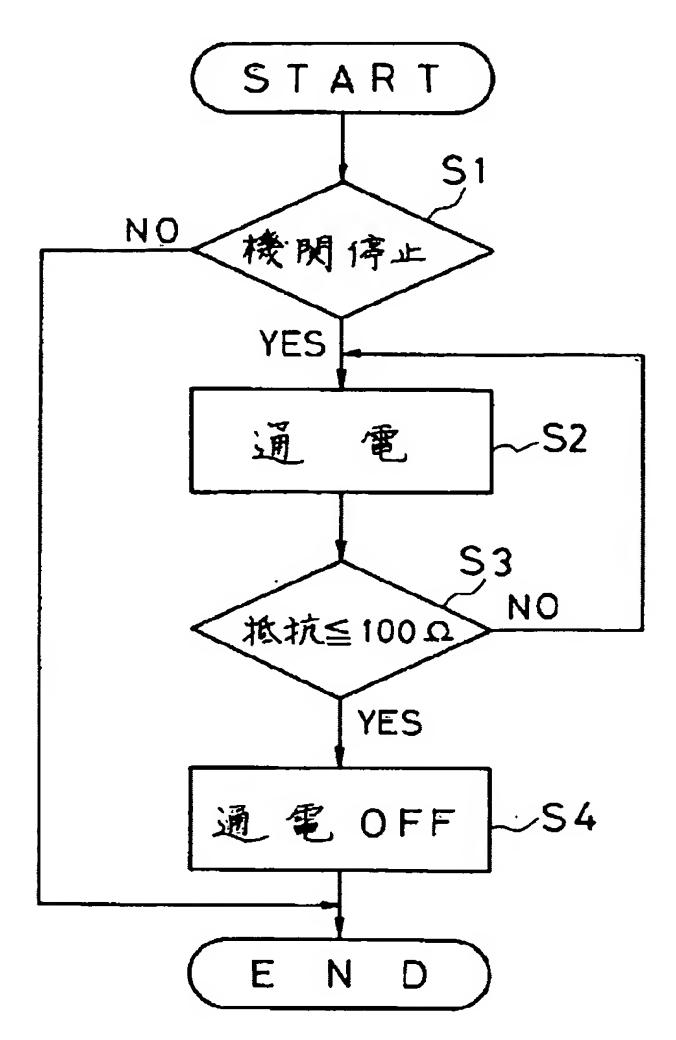
DRAWINGS

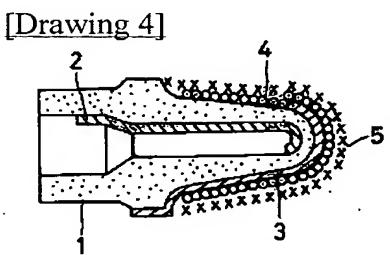


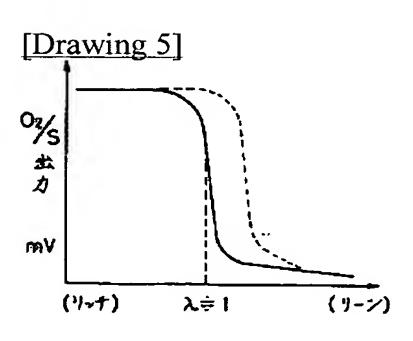
[Drawing 2]



[Drawing 3]







(19)日本国特許庁(JP)

(12) 公開実用新案公報 (U)

(11)実用新案出願公開番号

実開平6-58359

(43)公開日 平成6年(1994)8月12日

(51)Int.Cl.⁵

識別配号

庁内整理番号

FΙ

技術表示箇所

G01N 27/409

// F 0 2 D 41/14

3 1 0 G 8011-3G

7363-2 J

G01N 27/58

В

審査請求 未請求 請求項の数1 OL (全 3 頁)

(21)出願番号

実願平5-1942

(22)出願日

平成5年(1993)1月28日

(71)出願人 000232368

日本電子機器株式会社

群馬県伊勢崎市粕川町1671番地1

(72)考案者 星野 一仁

群馬県伊勢崎市粕川町1671番地1 日本電

子機器株式会社内

(74)代理人 弁理士 笹島 富二雄

(54)【考案の名称】 内燃機関の酸素センサ劣化防止装置

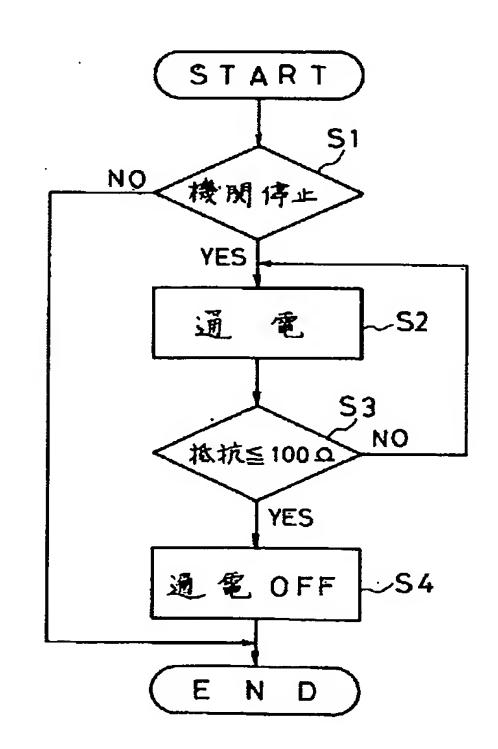
(57)【要約】

【目的】簡易な構造でありながら、センサ素子表面に付着したカーボン等をガス化させることにより酸素センサ素子の劣化を防止する。

【構成】機関停止後(S1)、内側電極と外側電極間に電圧を印加してセンサ素子表面を加熱する(S2)。そして、電極間への印加電圧値Vと出力電流値Iに基づき算出された酸素センサの内部抵抗値Rに基づきセンサ素子温度を推定する(S3)。即ち、酸素センサの内部抵抗値Rが所定値、例えば100Ω以下であれば、センサ素子温度が700°C以上に達して素子表面に付着しているカーボン等がガス化されていると推定されるので、内側電極と外側電極間への通電をOFFとしてセンサ素子表面への加熱を終了する(S4)。



186 words



(2)

実開平6-58359

【実用新案登録請求の範囲】

【請求項1】機関の排気系に介装されて、センサ素子の 夫々の電極が設けられた内外表面の一方を排気に、他方 を大気に接触させ、大気中の酸素濃度と排気中の酸素濃 度との比に応じて前記電極間に発生する起電力を取り出 して排気中の酸素濃度を検出する酸素センサを備えた内 燃機関において、

前記電極間を通電可能な回路構成とすると共に、

機関の停止状態を検出する機関停止検出手段と、

機関停止後、所定時間前記電極間を通電してセンサ素子 10 12b 外側電極 表面を加熱する通電加熱手段と、

を含んで構成したことを特徴とする内燃機関の酸素セン サ劣化防止装置。

【図面の簡単な説明】

本考案に係る酸素センサの構造を示す断面 【図1】 図。

【図2】 (a)は、図1の酸素センサの一部を省略し た分解斜視図、(b)は、(a)に示すジルコニアチュ ープの底面図。

酸素センサへの通電ルーチンを示すフローチ 20 【図3】

ヤート。

【図4】 従来の酸素センサの構造を示す断面図。

【図5】 従来の酸素センサの欠点を説明するための説 明図。

2

【符号の説明】

酸素センサ 1 0

ホルダ 1 1

1 2 ジルコニアチューブ

12a,内側電極

1 3 プロテクタ

14a, b コンタクトプレート

15 アイソレーションプッシュ

カバー 1 6

1 7 皿バネ

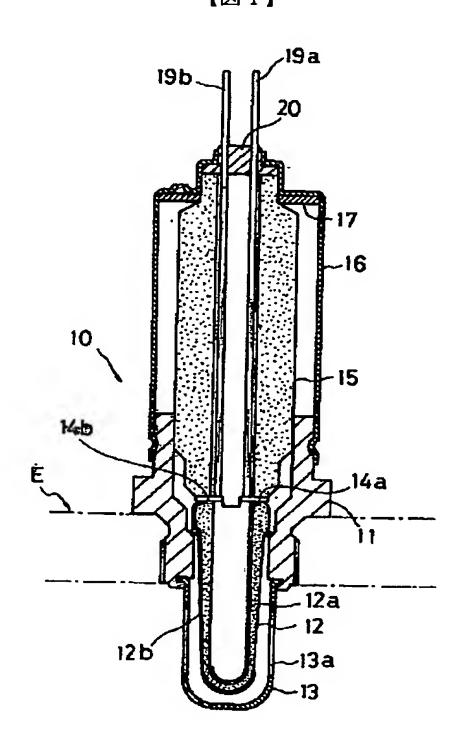
19a, b リード線

20 ラバーチュープ

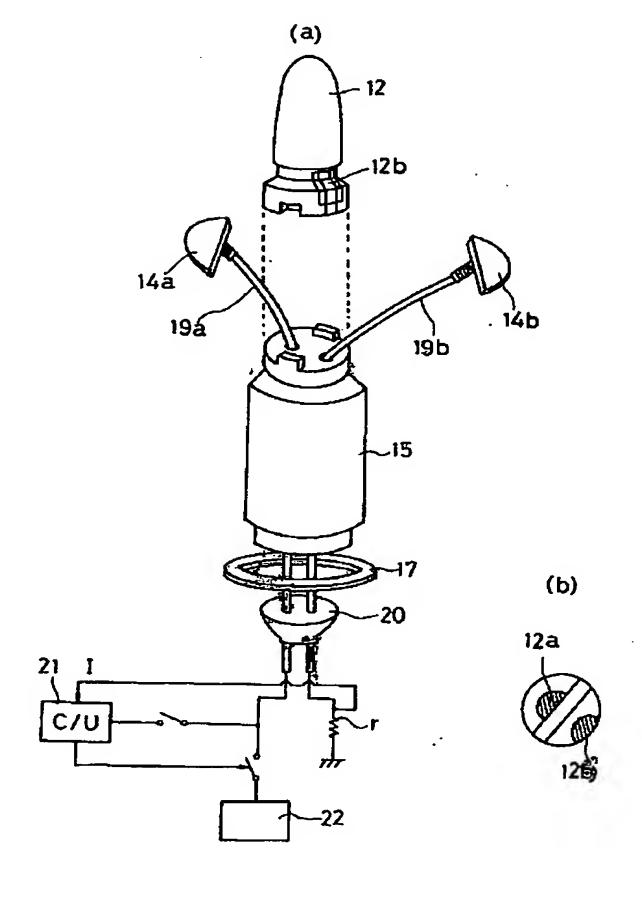
21 コントロールユニット

22 バッテリ

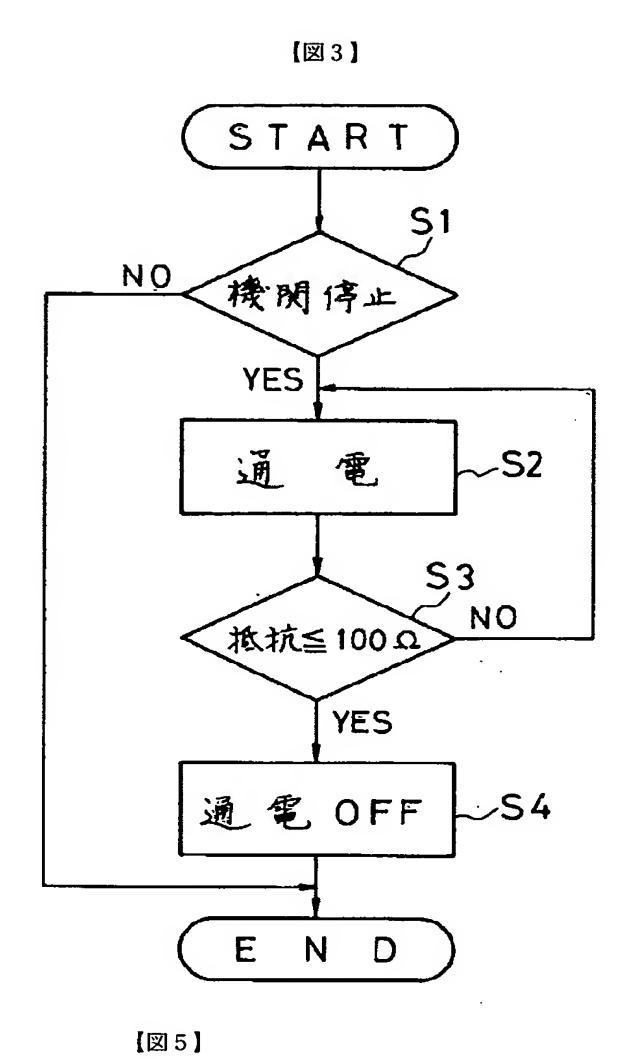
【図1】

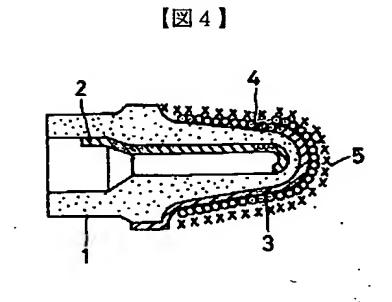


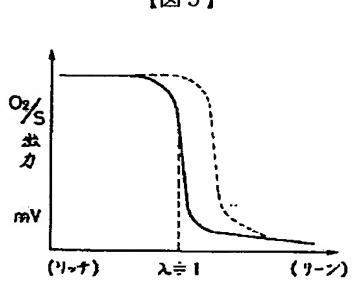
【図2】



(3)







【考案の詳細な説明】

[0001]

【産業上の利用分野】

本考案は、内燃機関の排気管に装着して該機関に供給される混合気の空燃比と 密接な関係にある排気中の酸素濃度を測定し空燃比フィードバック制御における フィードバック信号の提供に用いる酸素センサに関し、特に、その酸素センサ素子の劣化を防止する装置に関する。

[0002]

【従来の技術】

酸素センサは、ジルコニア等よりなるセンサ素子を機関の排気中に臨ませて、バケ大気中の酸素濃度(一定)と排気中の酸素濃度との比に基づいて発生する起電力を取り出し、これにより、排気中の酸素濃度を介して機関に吸入される混合気の空燃比を検出するもので、空燃比フィードバック制御に用いられている(実開昭63-41761号公報等参照)。

[0003]

従来、この種の酸素センサとしては、例えば図4に示すような構造を有したものがある(特開昭58-204365号公報等参照)。

即ち、このものは図において、先端部を閉塞した酸化ジルコニウム(ZrO2)を主成分としたセラミック管1の内表面と外表面の各一部には白金(Pt)ペーストを塗布した後、セラミック管1を焼成することで、起電力取り出し用の白金電極2,3を形成してある。セラミック管1の外表面には、更に白金を蒸着して触媒層4を形成し、その上からマグネシウムスピネル等の金属酸化物を溶射して、保護層5を形成してある。

$[0\ 0\ 0\ 4]$

そして、前記セラミック管1の内側に基準気体として大気が導かれるようにする一方、セラミック管1の外側を機関排気通路に臨ませて被検出気体である排気と接触させ、内表面に接触する大気中の酸素濃度と外表面に接触する排気中の酸素濃度との比に応じた電圧を白金電極2,3間に発生させることにより、排気中の酸素濃度を検出するものである。

[0005]

[0006]

一方、希薄混合気で燃焼させた時には、排気中に高濃度のO2 と低濃度のCOやHCがあるため、CO, HCとO2 とが反応してもまだO2 が余り、セラミック管1内外のO2 濃度比は小さく殆ど電圧は発生しない。

[0007]

【考案が解決しようとする課題】

ところで、機関の低負荷時や機関停止直後又はコールドスタート時等においては、酸素センサの排気管への取り付け位置近傍の排気温度が低温になるため、排気中のCOやHCが分解反応を起こし、カーボン(C)等が析出する。

そして、この析出したカーボン等は酸素センサ素子表面の保護層 5 に付着することにより、保護層 5 が目詰まりをおこし、ガスの通過量が制限されることにより応答性が悪化して、図 5 の点線で示されるように、制御点がリーン化して制御周波数の応答遅れが生じるといった問題点があった。

[0008]

尚、かかるセンサ素子表面に析出したカーボン等を除去するために、別途ヒータを取り付けたものもあるが、製品コストが高くなり好ましくない。

そこで、本考案はかかる従来の問題点に鑑みなされたものであり、簡易な構造でありながら、センサ素子表面に付着したカーボンをガス化させることにより酸素センサ素子の劣化を防止した内燃機関の酸素センサ劣化防止装置を提供することを目的とする。

[0009]

【課題を解決するための手段】

このため、本考案は、機関の排気系に介装されて、センサ素子の夫々の電極が

設けられた内外表面の一方を排気に、他方を大気に接触させ、大気中の酸素濃度と排気中の酸素濃度との比に応じて前記電極間に発生する起電力を取り出して排気中の酸素濃度を検出する酸素センサを備えた内燃機関において、前記電極間を通電可能な回路構成とすると共に、機関の停止状態を検出する機関停止検出手段と、機関停止後、所定時間前記電極間を通電してセンサ素子表面を加熱する通電加熱手段と、を含んで構成される。

[0010]

【作用】

かかる構成によれば、機関運転中は、センサ素子の夫々の電極が設けられた内外表面の一方を排気に、他方を大気に接触させ、大気中の酸素濃度と排気中の酸が素濃度との比に応じて前記電極間に発生する起電力を取り出すことによって、排気中の酸素濃度を介して機関に吸入される混合気の空燃比を検出して空燃比フィードバック制御に用いられるが、機関停止検出手段により機関運転の停止を検出すると、通電加熱手段が所定時間前記電極間を通電することによりセンサ素子表面を加熱する。

$[0\ 0\ 1\ 1]$

このように、別途ヒータを設けることなく起電力取り出し用の内外電極を使用して該電極間に通電することにより、簡易な構造でセンサ素子表面に付着したカーボン等のデポジットがガス化され、センサ素子外部へ排出することができる。従って、酸素センサ素子表面の保護層にカーボン等が付着することが極力防止され、該カーボン等の付着による保護層の目詰まりにより応答性が悪化して、制御点がリーン化して制御周波数の応答遅れが生じることを防止することができる。また、排気温度の低温時にも酸素センサの性能を確保できるので、低温始動後空燃比フィードバックを開始当初から良好な制御精度が得られる。ひいては空燃比フィードバックの開始時期を早めることもでき、これによって排気エミッションを改善することができる。

$[0\ 0\ 1\ 2]$

【実施例】

以下に、本考案の実施例を図面に基づいて説明する。

図1及び図2は、ZrO2 チューブ型の酸素センサ10の構造を示す図で、機関排気管壁Eに取り付けられるホルダ11の先端部に、センザ素子としてのセラミック管12(以下、ジルコニアチューブという。)を保持させ、これをスリット13a付のプロテクタ13によって覆ってある。

$[0\ 0\ 1\ 3]$

このジルコニアチューブ12の内表面と外表面の各一部には、起電力取り出し用の内側電極12aと外側電極12bが形成され、通常大気中の酸素濃度と排気中の酸素濃度との比に応じて発生する起電力を該電極より取り出して排気中の酸素濃度を検出する。尚、ジルコニアチューブ12基端部の外側電極12bにはホルダー11との絶縁状態を維持するために酸化ジルコニウム(ZrO2)を上かりら塗布して焼付印刷されている。

[0014]

また、ジルコニアチューブ12の開口端には、導電体である2つに分割されたコンタクトプレート14a, 14bを夫々内側電極12aと外側電極12bに電気的に接触させてあり、該コンタクトプレート14a, 14bは、筒状のアイソレーションブッシュ15の先端面で押圧してあり、アイソレーションブッシュ15は、ホルダー11に加締固定したカバー16で皿バネ17を介して固定してある。

[0015]

そして、コンタクトプレート14a, 14bにはリード線19a, 19bが圧着固定され、このリード線19a, 19bはアイソレーションブッシュ15の基端部の孔内に装着されるカバー16により加締固定されるラバーチューブ20に引通して外部に導出される。

このリード線19a, 19b間にはコントロールユニット21からの命令にしたがってバッテリ22より電圧を印加することによりセンサ素子12表面を加熱するようになっている。

[0016]

また、リード線19a,19b間への印加電圧値Vと電流検出用抵抗γの端子電圧として求められた出力電流値Iとがコントロールユニット21に入力され、

該入力値に基づきR=V/Iとして酸素センサの内部抵抗値Rが算出される。

次に、図3のフローチャートに基づき、本考案に係る酸素センサのヒータ通電 ルーチンを説明する。

$[0\ 0\ 1\ 7]$

先ず、ステップ1(以下「S1」という。)では、イグニッションキースイッチをOFFとして機関が停止されたか否かを判別する。そして、機関が停止されたと判別されたらS2へ進み、機関が運転状態にあれば本ルーチンを抜けて終了する。

S2では、リード線19a, 19bを介して内側電極12aと外側電極12b間に電圧を印加してセンサ素子12表面を加熱する。

[0018]

[0019]

尚、ここで、S1が機関停止検出手段として、S2が通電加熱手段として機能する。

このように、別途ヒータを設ける必要がなく、起電力取り出し用の内側電極と外側電極間に電圧を印加してセンサ素子表面を加熱することにより、簡易な構造でありながら、センサ素子表面に付着したカーボン等のデポジットがガス化され、センサ素子外部へと排出される。従って、酸素センサの保護層にカーボン等が付着することが極力防止され、例えば、保護層がカーボン等により目詰まりをおこすことにより応答性が悪化して、制御点がリーン化して制御周波数の応答遅れ

が生じることを防止することができる。

[0020]

また、排気温度の低温時にも酸素センサの性能を確保できるので、低温始動後空燃比フィードバックを開始当初から良好な制御精度が得られる。ひいては空燃比フィードバックの開始時期を早めることもでき、これによって排気エミッションを改善することができる。

[0021]

【考案の効果】

以上説明したように、本考案によれば、酸素センサ素子の内表面と外表面の各一部に、起電力取り出し用の内外電極を設けると共に、機関停止検出手段により、機関運転の停止を検出すると、通電加熱手段が所定時間前記電極間を通電することによりセンサ素子表面を加熱するように構成したので、別途ヒータを設ける必要がなく、簡易な構造でありながら、センサ素子表面に付着したカーボン等のデポジットがガス化され、センサ素子外部へと排出され、酸素センサ素子表面の保護層にカーボン等が付着することが極力防止され、例えば、保護層が目詰まりをおこして応答性が悪化して、制御点がリーン化して制御周波数の応答遅れが生じることを防止することができる。

[0022]

また、排気温度の低温時にも酸素センサの性能を確保できるので、低温始動後 空燃比フィードバックを開始当初から良好な制御精度が得られ、ひいては空燃比 フィードバックの開始時期を早めることもでき、これによって排気エミッション を改善することができる。